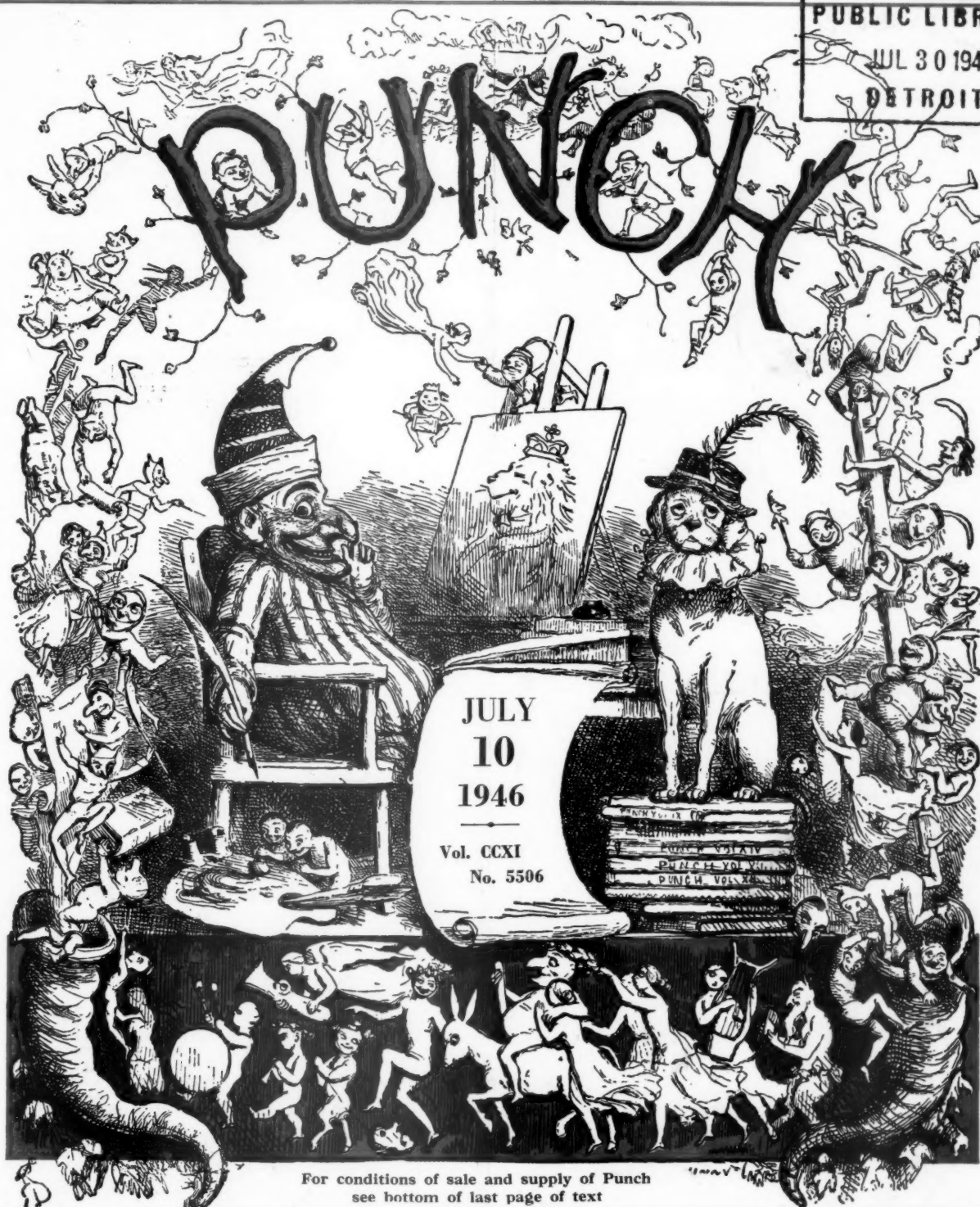


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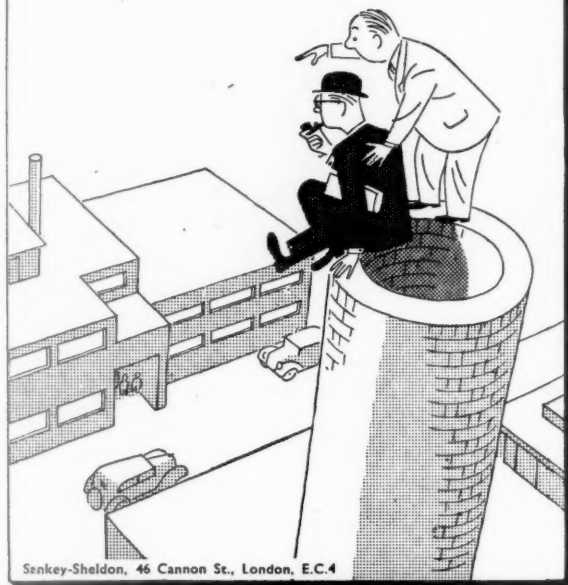


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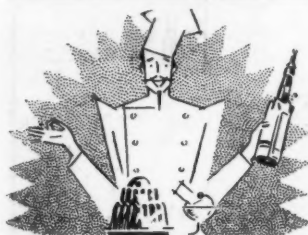


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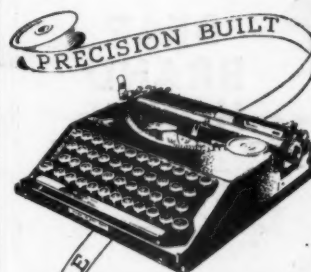
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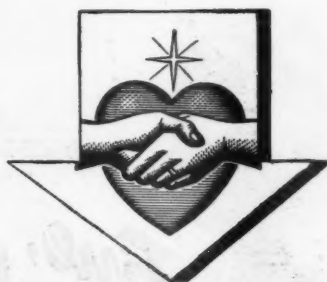
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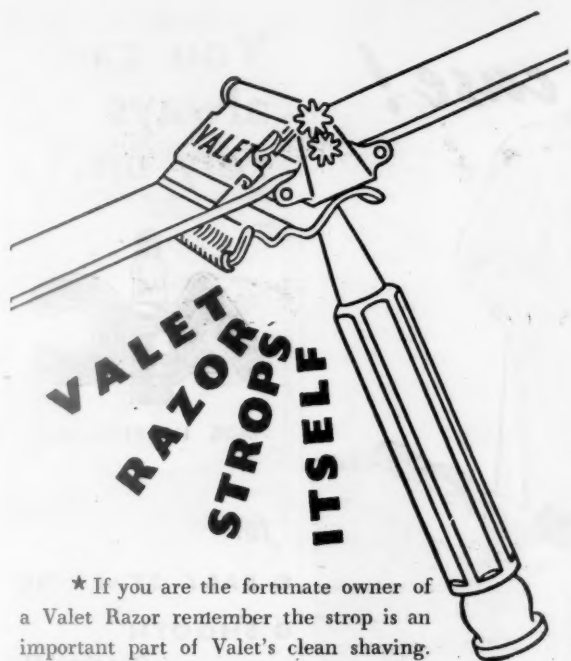
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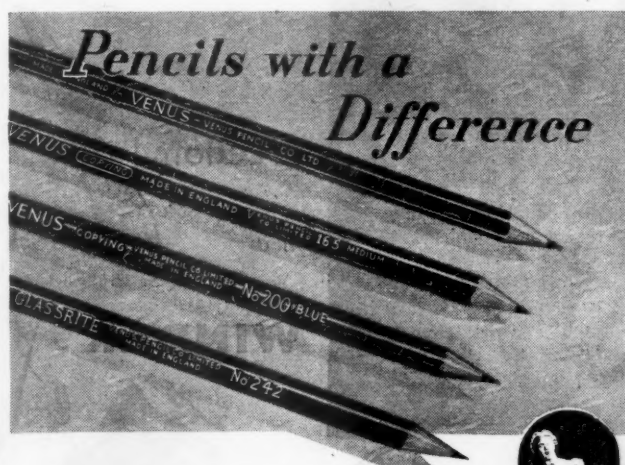
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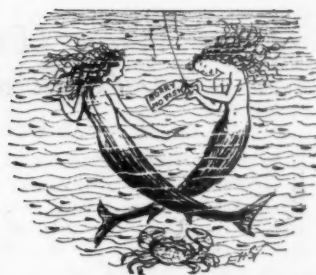
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# PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCXI No. 5506

July 10 1946

## Charivaria

IN dealing with the problem of wheat supplies the Food Ministry, we are told, is not considering a higher rate of extraction. An assurance in similar terms is eagerly awaited from the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

### Handyman

"They had to pass through an iron grille and a wooden door. The officer opened the iron grille, and while he was opening the wooden door Jackson made a bolt for it."—"Star."



A London grocer provides forms outside his shop for the use of the queue. He says they are filled up a great deal more quickly than those provided by the Ministry of Food for his own use.

"A smile goes a long way with foreigners," says a visitor to Britain. Did Mr. Bevin explore this avenue in Paris?

Toscanini's refusal to bring the Milan Scala Orchestra to London because of the revision of the French-Italian boundary came as an unpleasant surprise. It had always been supposed that Art knew no frontiers.

A new potato-peeling machine has been invented. The Government is doing everything it can to make the Army more attractive.

"Back to artificial wickets?" asks a cricketing note. In view of the uncertain weather we understand that experts are seriously considering the possibility of dehydrating Old Trafford.

Burglars broke into the *Punch* office last Thursday night. They took nothing of value—only the joke that should have been in this paragraph.

### Aren't We All?

"Man wanted, used to housework."

Advt. in "*Bedfordshire Times*."

"What is the reason," asks a writer in a weekly journal, "why one never sees a jockey with a moustache?" Persistent shaving seems to be the answer to this one.



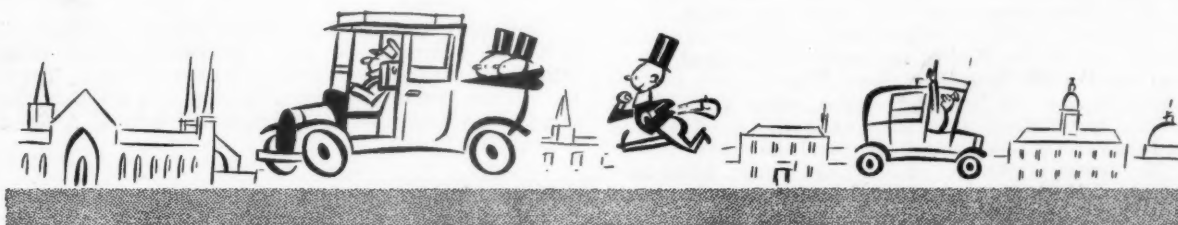
### "NURSES WILL WALK OUT"

All nurses in Danish hospitals will give notice tomorrow if their wage demands are not met. Doctors may follow them.

"*Sunday Express*."

If they don't somebody else will.

A headmaster told his scholars how as a boy he used to save a penny every day by running to school behind a tramcar. He should have run behind a taxicab and saved two shillings a day.





## Heat Wave Hits Journalist (Official).

MUFTI AT WIMBLEDON

THE threatened increase of minimum L.P.T.B. fares from 1½d. to 2d. led to astonishing scenes at Wimbledon yesterday, where members of the Independent Union of Bus Users crowded the stands to see the closing stages of the struggle for the Mildenhall Plate. Tempers already frayed by the intense heat rose to boiling point when Geoffrey Brown (Australia) was foot-faulted for attempting to take his stand on the White Paper, and it was some minutes before Mr. Hudson (Southport) could make himself heard above the uproar.

"I feel half as old as time," said Petra, interviewed after the game, "and it may be weeks before I am fit for service again." But this was denied by Admiral Blandy, who stated that though the superstructure was blackened and twisted by the heat there was nothing that could not be put right by a glass of heavy water. Both men declined to meet a delegation from the Master Bakers Association.

RADIO-ACTIVE GOATS RAID WHEAT STOCKS.

A complaint by M. Molotov that his bread-basket was empty, made at a secret dinner with Mr. Byrnes in Paris last night, led to an all-night sitting of the four Ministers. Mr. Byrnes, with Mr. Bevin's support, contended that under the Rules of Procedure bread could only be supplied on demand, but this was not acceptable to M. Molotov, who read a long extract from the *Evening Standard* in support of his view that more bread was eaten by people who asked for it than by those who did not. M. Bidault then proposed that half a piece of bread should be supplied to M. Molotov now, and that the other half should be taken after consideration of the Venezia Giulia problem. Mr. Byrnes and Mr. Bevin agreed, but M. Molotov once again imposed his veto, arguing that if bread was not a matter of substance he did not know what was.

Hopes of a compromise were raised this morning when the four Ministers were seen to leave the dining-room contentedly munching hay.

STRACHEY IN TROUBLE AT THE ROAD HOLE

Peckham housewives yesterday refused to co-operate in the plan to provide two new high-speed motor roads across the City of London. "It will do nothing to stop queueing," said Mrs. Lewisham, Secretary of the new Hands Off Ludgate Hill movement; "we consider it an absolute scandal that the Government should be building new roads with one hand and taking the bread out of the mouths of our children with the other. Peckham wants bread, not Circuses," she added, in a reference to the proposed new roundabout at the Cannon Street-Queen Victoria Street crossing.

The matter was raised again in the House of Commons late last night when Mr. Churchill (Conservative) asked the Prime Minister whether he was aware that certain newspapers had adopted the objectionable practice of putting the initials of Government supporters before their names and those of the Opposition after. This, he said, with an angry glance at Mr. Herbert Morrison, reflected little credit on the Government at a time when the reverberations of Bikini still echoed menacingly round the world.

Mr. Strachey (Minister of Food and Flour), rising to a height of 26,000 ft., then read a long report on Indonesia from *The Times*, which gave general satisfaction.

REBEL GREENGROCERS WARNED.

The neglect of Fishlock's claims for a place in the second Test Trial has angered Republican sentiment in the Middle West and may, it is thought, swing the House of Representatives against the Loan. Opposition has hardened too at St. Andrews, where Cotton (T. H.) claimed that American influences had affected his play off the tees. "I have acquired a sort of vicious spiral," he said, demonstrating with a spoon, "which, unless quickly controlled, may make it necessary to re-orientate my whole policy in the direction of the Right." This remark has had the unexpected result of causing Signor Toscanini to withdraw from the Diamond Skulls.

Ample supplies of tomatoes are, however, promised from Italy in the near future. H. F. E.

o o

## Table-Talk of Amos Intolerable

XXIX

BUT like nearly all the other good novelists nowadays," Amos said suddenly apropos of nothing, "I suppose I shall succumb to the temptations of Allegory, and get bogged in that. Well, I have my theme all ready. My novel will be called *The Refreshment Room*."

He looked round keenly and waited till a newcomer had ordered his drink.

"Probably," he then went on, "I shall plunge right into the story without any preliminary hints: makes the reader feel cleverer, leaves him kindlier-disposed. But of course hardly any of the characters will have names."

"No names?" said someone in dismay.

"No names," Amos repeated. "Names are too distracting, too much of an emotional stimulus. Probably the story will be told in the first person and that will take care of one name, but all the other personages will appear under portentous labels, The Barmaid, The Manageress, The Commercial Traveller, The Regular Customer, and so on. Every now and then The Porter will come in, representing . . . I haven't yet quite decided what."

"That portion of the outside world with rheumatism," his neighbour suggested.

"And over all will brood The Clock," Amos went on, taking no notice of this. "At one point someone will come in to wind The Clock: I might make that the climax, lead up to it with a lot of suspense. Oh, everything will be symbolic enough to choke an ox. And whenever I want to slow down what may be laughingly referred to as the action," he added, "of course there can be pages and pages of argument between two or more of the characters about the nature of War, and Peace, and Truth, and Justice, and one thing and another. Oh, dear me." He shook his head. "It'll be easy enough to write, I admit, but I doubt whether I shall have the patience to read it again in proof."

\* \* \* \* \*

"It doesn't seem to be generally realized, by the way," he observed shortly after this, "that there is little more chance of satisfactorily defining Honour, Justice, Truth and all the rest of them than there is—for precisely the same sort of reasons—of satisfactorily defining A Good Cup of Tea."

\* \* \* \* \*

He surprised us once by saying "It may have occurred to you to wonder why my parents named me after the



### THE SHEEP-DIP

"Give me a chance, Herbert. Don't send them through so fast."



*"I wouldn't recommend the fish."*

earliest of the twelve minor prophets. Well, the answer is that they didn't; they named me after the only one of my father's uncles from whom he had no expectations. A subtle man, my father."

Somebody said "But why was your father's *uncle* named after the earliest of the twelve minor prophets?" and Amos, observing the focus of interest shifting too far back into the past, grew irritated.

"Do you think I come here to talk about the Christian names of my great-uncles?" he demanded.

He was not at all mollified when another member of the company said "It would make a change."

One evening recently, as each newcomer entered and approached the bar, Amos took it upon himself to call out the warning "They've only got Trieste!"

To the invariable puzzled look and the occasional inquiry he would then reply by indicating his own glass and saying with a look of disgust "Trieste. A disputed port."

I have mentioned before his often disconcerting interest in other people's meals. Not long ago when he had scowled for some time at a man who, after receiving a

plate of food over the bar, had proceeded to smother it with salt and pepper without attempting to taste it first, Amos turned back to us and indulged in a reminiscence: "I well remember how interested I was, on my first visit to France, to notice a diner casually making his own salad-dressing, as if the action were quite ordinary and habitual, by mixing salt, mustard and vinegar on his plate. When foreigners come over here, on the other hand, they must be interested to find that they are served with plates of hot water and expected to use the salt, pepper and Worcester sauce to make their own soup."

"That took the wind out of his sails," said somebody, referring to a particularly pompous character who was not present.

Amos said, "Dear me. Did there seem to be anything left at all?"

Sometimes he spends the evening in a state of almost suicidal gloom which nothing seems to be able to relieve. It was on one of these occasions that he broke a very long depressed silence by asking: "Has it ever been suggested that the Hanging Gardens of Babylon were the gardens where the Babylonians did their hanging?"

R. M.



## The Psychology of Crime

AT the crest of the crime-wave my brother Humbolt was demobilized and came to spend one of his celebrated "fortnights" with us at "Fairlea," Pinder's Hill, N.11. I was depressed to observe no change in him. His five years with the Department of Psychological Warfare seemed merely to have increased his aplomb, if that were possible. Elder brothers almost everywhere will know what I mean.

Humbolt was extremely interested in the crime-wave—so much so that he was good enough to read aloud to me everything my papers said about it when I returned from the office each evening. He has a nice ringing voice as a rule, but my tobacco evidently disagreed with his throat. Humbolt felt that my precautions—the fixing of mortise locks to front and back doors—were elementary and futile. He wanted our defences organized on a psychological footing. His view was that no burglar would enter any house where the inmates appeared to be up and doing, so he proposed to leave the radio on all night, tuned to some American or jazz-ridden Continental station, to have a number of lights operating intermittently—like traffic signs—and to leave all doors slightly ajar.

Naturally I poured as much kindly ridicule on these ideas as possible, but he remained typically enthusiastic and had soon won his sister-in-law over to his warped way of thinking.

Whether there really was anything in Humbolt's system I cannot say, but "Fairlea" certainly seemed to live a charmed life during the next few weeks. In that period eight houses of the twelve in our cul-de-sac were burgled—some more than once. My brother was elated and dismissed my complaints about the nocturnal noise, the soaring electric-light bill and the strong smell of cat that had begun to pervade our house as unduly carping.

But the trouble with Humbolt is that he will never let well alone. One night I returned home to find him in a state of great excitement about a new plot he had hatched. Shorn of its psychological trimmings this was a declaration of a spring offensive. Our own lines were intact, he said: we could now sally forth into the camp of the enemy. *We would catch a thief.*

Humbolt proposed that we should now revert to a complete black-out with the intention of luring any prowler into a carefully-laid trap.

"So you'll stick a notice on the door, 'No milk till Friday,' eh?" I said, with what I intended as a sneer.

Humbolt glanced at my wife and then smiled sweetly at me.

"No, not quite as brilliantly original as that," he said. "I merely propose to have the telephone ring rather obviously and remain unanswered—at fairly regular intervals throughout the night. From the roadway you can hear the bell quite distinctly and anyone loitering with intent will jump at such a glorious opportunity. He will break in and be caught absolutely red-handed by us, you and me, operating from prepared positions."

Let me admit it—I was genuinely surprised and silenced by the brilliance of the plan. Humbolt had surpassed himself.

It was agreed that Madge should spend a week with her parents at Putney in order to make the succession of night calls to "Fairlea." She went off happily enough, leaving Humbolt to keep himself alive on my rations.

Our vigil began on a Monday night. We lay under the stairs armed with an impressive variety of weapons ranging from pokers to trip-wires while Madge played her part magnificently with the telephone. It rang

continuously for minutes at a time, cut out and started up again—and it did it all through the night. Unless you have listened to a telephone ringing uselessly for hours on end you can have no idea of the mental torture it entails. Even Humbolt had to admit after three nights that his nerves were getting a bit on edge. And Humbolt, remember, slept soundly each day while I was at the office.

It happened on the Friday, at about three o'clock in the morning. The bell was ringing furiously when we heard a footfall by the back door. We crawled into position and waited while the lock was being forced. We saw a torch flash and we leapt. Inside a minute we had our man semi-conscious and pinioned.

No, reader, our captive was *not* a policeman. He was just an ordinary tough-looking crook. Humbolt slapped his face to revive him and gloated.

"Thought the house was empty, didn't you?" he said.

"Empty? Nah. I thought as 'ow there must be some ole cock bedridden or somethin' who couldn't take a call from his long-lost son. So I decided to given an 'elpin' 'and, see!"

"Come off it!" said Humbolt.

"No, honest, mate," said the crook, "I thinks, 'ullo, per'aps somebody a long way off 'as noticed the 'ouse is on fire an' rings up to let 'em know. An' per'aps the folks upstairs is already fixiated an' can't 'ear, so I reckons I'd better make a forced entry, as they say, see!"

"Why, you dirty little . . ." said Humbolt.

"Awright mate, I'll come clean. I 'ears them bells an' I notices they ring so many times and then stop, and start again and ring a different number o' times. So bein' in the last war in Signals and knowin' me morse, I realizes it's a message in code—probably from my pal Shiner Lee who knows I'm workin' these parts. So I decides to . . ."

"You unmitigated . . ." yelled Humbolt, boiling with rage.

"Okey doke," said the tough, "I see I can't fool you, mate. What 'appens is this, I 'ears them bells and I reckons the bloke who lives 'ere is one of them blokes who 'as to be at work pronto and 'as a pal to wake 'im up by phone like a 'alarm clock, see. So I says to meself . . ."

By this time I was really enjoying the situation. Hod.



"Silly, I call it, allowing mothers to play for the Parents' Eleven."

## Lady Addle at the Wheel

*Bengers, Herts, 1946*

**M**Y DEAR, DEAR READERS,  
—I hope I shall be applauded and not scolded for this letter, which is to tell you that, at the age of seventy-eight, I am learning to drive a car!

The idea occurred to me suddenly one morning when Porridge, who came to us—it seems only yesterday—as a raw boy in 1892, sent up a message to say he could hardly move with lumbago, poor fellow. This, in addition to his encroaching deafness and his one blind eye (where he once had the honour of being peppered by a Prime Minister), started me wondering if perhaps he was getting somewhat beyond his work. Somebody younger, I thought, should be on hand for such occasions as this. Then, in a flash, the idea came to me. What about myself? I can give Porridge at least a year, if not eighteen months, and nowadays we should all be able to turn ourselves to anything—even to turning a steering-wheel!

Besides, the motoring tradition is strong in our family. As early as 1905 my father took his car—a De Dion Bouton wagonette with an up-to-date acetylene gas plant for its gleaming brass headlamps and a real steering-wheel instead of the old-fashioned tiller—to Scotland. A daring adventure it was then, as even with the footmen carrying the luncheon-baskets, and the family walking, up the hills, it was risky to attempt any gradient of less than 1 in 20. In those days of course there was always the sprag—a pointed piece of iron which was let down from underneath the car to prevent it running backwards—which gave one a feeling of security. I have often regretted the abolition of this comforting provision.

Addle too is one of our nation's pioneer motorists, and quite recently his name has appeared in all the best motoring papers, when he advertised his motor tricycle for sale—a great wrench after forty-seven years. What a splendid little affair it was too! A Popper-Benz-Blitzoff it was called—the ideal thing for a sporty motorist, with a nice turn of speed. You had to run quite fast to keep up with it. Addle bought it for spinning to and from his estate office, but he used it only occasionally, as pushing it hurt his back.

Mipsie of course has toured all over the world, and can drive any make of 8-cylinder car, while both my dear

boys are keen motorists. James indeed once entered for the London-Land's End Trials, but most unfortunately took a wrong turning at Ealing and landed up in Bournemouth. However, he got there well before the others reached Land's End, so in a way he had won, though he didn't get the prize, which was of course most disappointing for him. As for Hecey—who inherits my inventive talent to a marked degree—he did great things in the war, experimenting with the reduction of petrol consumption. He had the brilliant idea that, as bicarbonate of soda undoubtedly increases the strength of tea, it might well have the same effect if inserted into the petrol tank. He was just, he thinks, getting results, when his car completely broke down and had to go to the garage to have a new engine. Still, that was also a triumph in itself, as he saved eight months' petrol thereby.

My dear Margaret can drive of course, but has not done much motoring during the war. She never, even in uniform, seemed able to pick up a lift, I don't know why.

There remains myself. The only one of the family who couldn't drive. Come, thought I, this is disgraceful. So the very morning on which poor Porridge was laid low I went to the garage and gave myself my first lesson. I could not manage to start the car—but that, I decided, could come later—and I found the gears quite immovable at first, till I discovered the clutch—so you see I am quite mechanically-minded. Even so, I did not know which gear was which, so after a bit I gave it up and confined myself to practising the horn, which I really managed most professionally—so much so that unluckily our head groom heard me and came to interrupt my self-tuition. He was horrified. "You're never going to try and drive, m'lady," he said. "Not only try, but succeed, George," I answered. "So just stop objecting and teach me the different gears, please."

And that was how I learnt to drive a car. I should never have mastered the gears, which go in the form of an H apparently, if I had not made up a little rhyme to help me, and which I gladly pass on to my readers:

*Up* with your heart and *up* the first gear,  
*Down* for the second and *down* with your fear,

*Over* to third and your trouble's half over,  
*Back* into top and you lean back—in clover.

After the third day, and many attempts to get into reverse, which always ended in first gear, so that I have, I fear, injured Margaret's bicycle beyond repair, I managed to back the car out and to take it, with George's help, along the west drive, where I thought Addle—who I knew would strongly disapprove of my little adventure—would be least likely to see me. Besides, I had unfortunately knocked down some Wellingtonias which he had just had planted near the garage, and I wanted time to have them replaced. On the fifth day I considered I could drive a car. Unfortunately George did not agree. So the only thing to do was to give the good fellow the slip and make for the park gates myself—then, *hey, presto!* for the open road.

\* \* \* \* \*  
I decided that I would wait till I had been outside the park twice, so that I could really call myself an experienced motorist, before I finished this letter. But on the second occasion something so unlucky has happened that I still feel too shaky to write about it. I will try to tell my dear readers about my unfortunate experiences later on. M. D.

## Let

**W**E are paying a pretty stiff rent for our flat at Muntion-on-Sea, and when I took it last November and the agent named the price I said at first that it was quite out of the question.

He leaned forward confidentially.

"It sounds a lot," he said, "but between you and me you will be able to get at least half of it back by letting the flat furnished for July and August. I should think you would be able to ask nine guineas a week for those holiday months."

So we took the flat, and in April I sauntered along to the agent and said that I was quite willing to let the flat for nine guineas a week for July and August. He came along to have a look at it, and after a good glance round shook his head.

"Nine guineas is rather a lot," he said.

"I know it is rather a lot," I replied. "Personally I think it is

completely mad, but madness seems the fashion nowadays, and when I rented the flat nine guineas was the figure you named for July and August."

He did not deny it.

"But you will remember that I said nine guineas *furnished*," he pointed out.

"It *is* furnished," I said indignantly.

"There's furniture *and* furniture," was his rejoinder. "And the stuff in the spare bedroom, although no doubt precious as family heirlooms . . ."

I could quite see what he meant, so I agreed to accept seven guineas, and from then on we had a constant stream of visitors to see the flat. With the first few dozen we were very charming and offered them cups of tea and even slices of cake. Then, with the next lot, we were merely quietly pleasant, and eventually we adopted a tone of calculated rudeness, which was no more than they deserved.

"Not a bad little scullery," they used to say. "But where is the kitchen?"

We pointed out that it was a scullery-kitchen, and they said it was very nice, and asked to see the bedrooms. Most of them said that the spare bedroom would be a useful cupboard to store their baggage, but where was the third bedroom, as advertised?

In the end, after spending quite a large sum on advertisements, we managed to clinch the deal with a rather simple couple from Croydon, for six guineas a week.

"That's fifty pounds, anyway," said Edith triumphantly, "which is a very nice little bit off our annual rent."

Only then did we begin to consider what we intended to do with ourselves during July and August. Obviously it would be absurd to go to the seaside. Edith rather fancied London, but I leaned towards a cottage in the country, and we had quite an argument about it.

We spent a lot more money on advertising for flats in London and cottages in the country, but without result, so in the end we decided that it would have to be the seaside, after all. We laughed a good deal over this absurd dénouement, as Edith called it.

The joke lost some of its savour, however, when in the end we had to fix up to stay in an hotel at Mutton-on-Sea at a total cost for the two of us of fourteen guineas a week.

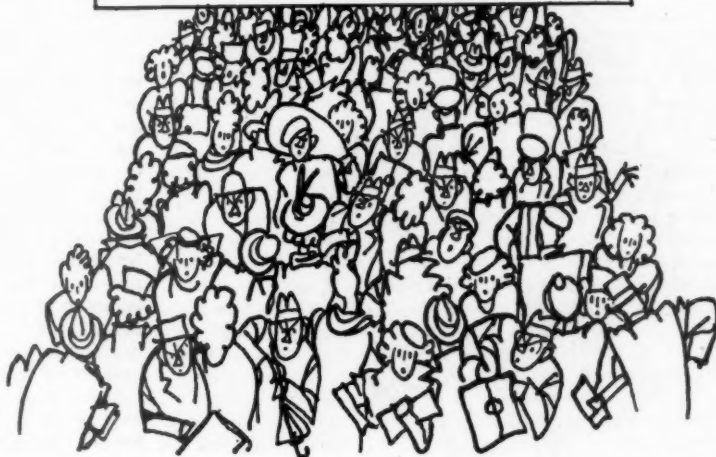
#### Happy Choice

"During the singing of the hymn, 'Tell me the old, old story,' an offering was taken to cover the expenses of the gathering."

"Faversham News."

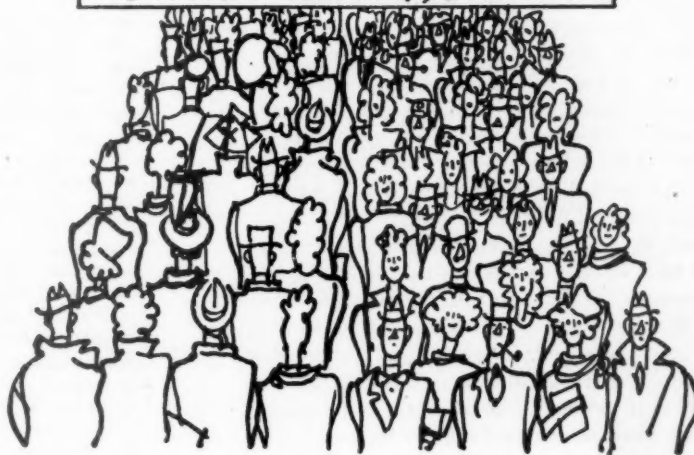
*Here we have the state of affairs at any public steps or passage at any time of day on any day of the week—*

KEEP TO THE LEFT



*It really is rather pathetic, when one realizes that the whole of this confusion could easily be avoided if only the public were appealed to—*

JUST YOU BARGE YOUR WAY  
THROUGH ANYWHERE YOU LIKE:  
IT'S A FREE COUNTRY, ISN'T IT?



*in the right way.*





*"Another ha'penny on firefighters, Mr. Massley, and another regrettable step in the direction of uncontrolled inflation."*

## All Awry

I WANT to know, am I the only stooge  
Who has this trouble between "gauge" and "gouge"?  
Or is it "gouge"? Am I a problem child  
Because, to me, "misled" is always "misled"?  
Does one pronounce the "Mall" as I do "Mall,"  
Or does it rhyme with "shall"; or not at all?  
I have—I think I have—my "orgy" taped  
But "prosecute" is still not firmly shaped  
And gets mixed up with "persecute" at times,  
I can't divorce "executor" from crimes,  
And have internal struggles when I say  
"Quayside"—I want to call it "quay"—  
Do there exist some types who, without fail,  
Can spot the winner between "goal" and "gaol,"  
Unerring supermen who know their stuff  
And call it "slough"? (or, dammit, is it "slough"?)  
I hope there are, to prove it can be done;  
Meanwhile, I ask again, am I the one—  
The only one in our rough island story—  
Who always gets such words as these all awry?

## Hints

I THINK that to-day I shall be really practical and set out to help my readers. For example, I can do something about their worn-out ties, if it is only to mellow their attitude to such ties by explaining that it is not so much that the tie wears out most at the place which shows most as that the tie shows most at the place it is worn out at. Apart from this, I can only be rather obvious and suggest that if the edges are frayed the tie can be turned in a bit more so that the frayed edges disappear, and some of the tie with it. After all, if my readers were to turn the tie further out they would still have the frayed edges, but now they would be frayed parallel lines, and I don't suppose anyone would like that any better. But, people will be asking, what about the sort of tie with a hole plumb in the middle? What can they do after they have unpicked the tie and laid it flat to expose a surprising lot of spare stuff previously hidden at the back? Well, I don't really know what they can do that they haven't done already—be surprised, and realize wistfully that the hole still comes plumb in the middle, try tying the tie so that the hole comes under the knot, unfold the tie again, be surprised again, and so on. Something may come of all this, I don't deny; but I shall leave my tie-owning readers to it, and go on to another lot, the ones who are glueing things together and waiting for the glue to get tacky. My advice here is brisk and positive—don't sit around brooding. Go off and do something else, and remember to get back before the glue is dry. I am sorry to nag, but the people who sit watching wet glue would be the first to admit they deserve it.

Now a few words on the care of watches. The first thing I have to say is that if the watch-strap is on backwards, I mean with the buckle having to go the wrong side to get the watch-face the right way up, then my readers will just have to get used to it. The point is not to get the watch on upside down. I know my readers know this, but I thought they might like a word of encouragement in what is probably the most minor problem of efficient watch-maintenance. Assuming that a watch either keeps the right time or has settled down into some sort of alternative routine, the major problem is remembering to wind it. This should not of course be a major problem at all, and statisticians admit that the number of people who wind their watches when they take them off at night is really very encouraging—but it does become one when we suddenly find that our watch has stopped for no reason, by which I mean for the obvious reason. It is a blow to the self-esteem to have to put a good watch right by twiddling the hands—psychologists rank it with lighting a cigarette-lighter with a match—and my hint here is not to be over-eager to make it up to the watch afterwards. All a watch needs is winding to get it to go again, and remembering not to worry when it finishes winding too soon that night. Any excess of emotion can be used up in excuses to the time-asking friends we have lost face with.

My next hint concerns combs that break suddenly. It is just this—that all combs break suddenly when they do break, and one minute we may be combing our hair with a perfectly good comb and the next staring at two halves—or, with luck, one quarter and one three-quarters—and wondering how it happened. Psychologists say this thought-process, which includes piecing the comb together in our minds and thinking how easy life would be if we could only go back a few seconds, is inevitable and there to compensate for the comb having broken so suddenly. It



William Smeley

"... and on the back is a list of our staff vacancies."

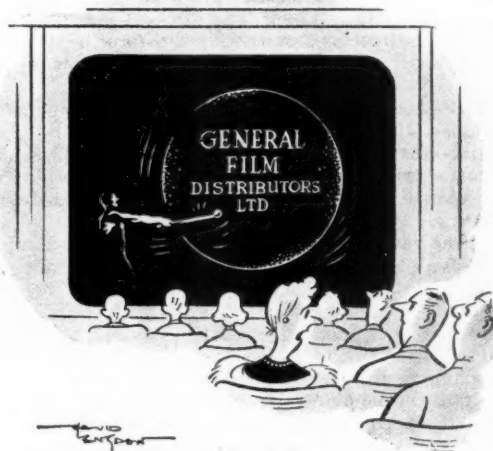
sort of rounds it all off, they say, and anyway it doesn't take long. So next time it happens I don't want my readers to be angrier with the comb than they would be anyway, or credit it with more malice than a comb, with its limited equipment, may be expected to have.

A lot of people type instead of write nowadays, and as a good many of this lot of people have never learnt how to, a few hints should not come amiss. To such people as have to trail the left forefinger along the middle row until it reaches the letter *a* simply because they have not developed their little finger to give the key the necessary bash I can only say that I read the other day about a newly-invented keyboard which will do away with all this, and give them quite a different letter to trail their left forefinger along to. In fact this new keyboard, if it happens, will be a boon to amateurs, who will be able to see the new arrangement of the letters from the same fine unprejudiced viewpoint that they see the old keyboard from now. I haven't heard, by the way, that anyone has invented anything to take the place of the little jigger which changes the ribbon from the half being used now to the half used last week. Some of my readers may be so dumb that they don't know why there is a red dot one side of the jigger and a black dot the other. This is a reminder that if private typewriter-owners are not careful they may get sold a red and black striped ribbon and will have to use up the red half on letters to the kind of friend who will appreciate it. And now here is a real sound hint to those of you who do not type very well. Leave three spaces after a full stop, and (even more important) none before it, and you will find, if you have got everything else right, that your typing will look as good as anyone's. Many an otherwise correct bit of typewriting is spoilt because people don't know this, and you have no idea how

it hurts the experts, by which I mean you can't guess how superior they feel.

Now for those readers who have just got their loose covers back from the wash and are waiting excitedly to put them on their arm-chairs or their sofa. For these people there is about to be a moment of bafflement when they unfold a cover and are confronted with that mass of vague promontories and huge flat surfaces which reminds them of nothing so much as the last time they went through all this. My advice here is simple and kindly: *Don't panic*. Look for the fastenings, grip a nearby promontory and try getting it over the back of the sofa or arm-chair. If you find you are obviously putting the arm over, then you should obviously be holding not this bit but the next bit, and if this bit seems even worse then go back to what you thought was the arm and you may find that now it seems like the back. Sooner or later you will get the back over the back, and the rest will be just a matter of time, and well worth it when you have finished. And before leaving upholstery I must say a word to anyone trying to get the stuffing out of one cushion-cover into another. The actual process is easy enough for those who keep calm and remember to sew the new cushion up before their enthusiasm leaves them; but I must advise the cushion-stuffer that anyone coming into the room before the extra fluff has been swept up will think something terrible has happened, and will want a bright but calm explanation which will make even the extra fluff seem efficient.

Well, I think I have given my readers enough hints for the moment, and because most of them have been rather domestic I shall end on an artistic note and give you some advice on going round the Academy. Most people, I know, will tell themselves that apart from tired feet they will not have succeeded in getting from the pictures quite what the critics seemed to think lay in wait for them. They will feel, humbly and secretly, that they have let art down. I would like to tell them that almost all the other people feel the same, but this would make the process more inexplicable than ever. So I advise them to stay as they are; gearing themselves up to learn more about art in the future, and encouraging themselves by believing that the people round them are all as clever and art-loving as other people look from the outside when there is nothing to prove they aren't.



"Can't think what to prepare for to-morrow's dinner."



*"Now, let me see—I started with cold soup, then tough liver with sloshy potatoes and raw spring greens, and finished up with burnt marmalade tart and a cup of tepid varnish."*

### Week-End Wood

**T**HIS week-end I have wandered to the heart of Hangman's Copse

Seeking diversions of a sort unheard of in the shops.  
The foxglove nods its lissom head from bicycles and prams

And little gnomes have made their homes in non-effective trams.

Out of the ducal game-preserves one may behold emerge  
The spotted tripper quaintly clad in plumes of purple serge.  
In the ground elder he has laid his clutch of hard-boiled eggs

And on the path the beetles bath, bewildered, in his dregs.  
From him a fearful quadruped flees with a startled squeak,  
Seeming to those in front a Chow, to those behind a Peke.

Around its feet in frenzied mood the leaves inanely caper,  
Some long since dead, some lately shed from Friday's evening paper.

Here lurks the lepidopterist who pounces with his net  
On the discarded cuticles that housed the cigarette;  
And taunting him with memories of more abandoned days,  
The match-box too, all red and blue, rewards his patient gaze.

Stray sunbeams drop their diamond beads and brooches  
as I pass

Into the little laughing pools of beer and broken glass,  
While to the sportsman's practised eye the rabbit holes  
reveal

The sheltered world of coyly curled outlandish orange peel.  
As I recline a little while in this sequestered place  
A flustered paper bag pursues its mate across my face.  
Before my eyes there rears the sharp and sinister outline  
Of gipsy kings whose underthings with the wild rose  
entwine.

The middle distance softly glows with subtle browns and greys

Which to the student of such things imply some sort of stays.  
And here the scientist in search of specimens may choose  
Species of rock where clings a sock or blows a bunch of shoes.

Lulled by the hum of charabancs that throng the wood-land road,

I'll make a table of this tyre and implement an ode.  
What with these cans and frying-pans and kitchen stoves  
gone wrong,

Never before has there been more material for song.





HIGH WIND IN THE WEST

"I mustn't let that happen to me."

## Impressions of Parliament

### Business Done

**Monday, July 1st.**—House of Commons: Alice in Parliament.

**Tuesday, July 2nd.**—House of Commons: Thirsty work.

**Wednesday, July 3rd.**—House of Commons: Bread debate.

**Thursday, July 4th.**—House of Commons: An Apology.

**Monday, July 1st.**—Members are becoming painfully aware that no Ministerial or ex-Ministerial library is complete without a well-thumbed volume of *Alice Through the Looking-Glass*. Lewis Carroll seems to have had a word for it—like his predecessors the Greeks. And so it was that Mr. R. A. BUTLER to-day cast Mr. HERBERT MORRISON as the White Knight to Miss ELLEN WILKINSON's Red Queen—White Knight because he was "ever piling on his defenceless horse every sort of encumbrance, the nationalization of this, the nationalization of that, a beehive here and a mouse-trap there."

Mr. BUTLER thought that the Government educational policy could best be likened to the most remarkable of the impedimenta of the White Knight, the sandwich box "upside down and empty so that the rain would not get in."

It would not have taken much after this for Mr. W. G. COVE, in stormy mood, to have substituted "Ellen in Blunderland" for the title of her department's much-criticized pamphlet, "The Nation's Schools."

Resisting the temptation to be drawn into the fray, the Red Queen smilingly "tut, tut, tutted"—one un-Parliamentary "tut" after another—to the exasperation of Mr. COVE, who reminded the right hon. lady that she could not laugh it off with her usual flippancy.

Gallantly to the rescue came Miss WILKINSON's poetic Parliamentary Secretary, Mr. D. R. HARDMAN, who roundly slated Mr. COVE in verse, quite terse.

Hon. Members later viewed with mixed feelings the attempt of Mr. E. L. GANDAR DOWER to poeticize the misdeeds of the Air Ministry. Undeterred by a call to order for reading his poem when only half-way through, Mr. GANDAR DOWER persisted in his recitation without notes. It was with marked restraint that a thinning House refrained from echoing the last line of this lyrical peroration: "Haunt us not with Gandar Dowers."

Mr. GEOFFREY DE FREITAS, the Under-Secretary for Air, gracefully

accepted the rôle of King Lear, "a man more sinned against than sinning," in having the sins of his Conservative and Liberal forefathers visited upon him. But, he pointed out, "a Minister must be assumed to have a free will, and if the Air Ministry has sinned I must do the penance."

At Question-time Mr. ALFRED BARNES, the Minister of Transport, uttered some strangely unrealistic sounds that chilled the hearts of the Members for Wales and mystified his more sympathetic colleagues from east of the border.

Mr. BARNES found a disturbing number of l's in Pwllheli, a quite



THE TURNCOCK

The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that the present issue of Two-and-a-half per cent. Savings Bonds would be continued until Tuesday, July 9, and that the tap would then be turned off.

unnecessary cluster of c's in Criccieth and a triumphantly emphatic "doc" in Portma-doc. It all had something to do with the running of through railway coaches to these outlandish spots, and Mr. BARNES would obviously have preferred to run his coaches to straightforward Rhyl or some other monosyllabic resort.

Mr. WILLIAM WILLIAMS was prepared to make all necessary allowances for the Minister's pronunciation, and must have been further mollified by Mr. BARNES's statement that he had confirmed it beforehand with a Yorkshireman and a Lancashireman.

The House interrupted its normal business of the day to discuss the emergency in Palestine. Members

listened attentively to two outstanding contributions from Mr. S. S. SILVERMAN and Mr. D. L. LIPSON—both eloquent, sincere and moving.

**Tuesday, July 2nd.**—The House was in a somewhat somnolent mood to-day with the temperature soaring into the eighties. Mr. Speaker startled some of the more heat-stricken Members into "action stations" when his voice echoed through the Chamber by way of a newly-installed microphone above his chair.

The sunny surroundings and the tropical heat possibly gave Mr. OLIVER LYTTTELTON on the Opposition Front Bench the impression that he was at Lord's for the day, for six hours before the normal close of play he suddenly interrupted Mr. GLENVIL HALL with an appeal against the light.

Mr. HALL at the crease had got his eye in, however, and insisted on play continuing while the blinds were drawn. In a darkened Chamber he attempted to throw a little more light on the intentions of the Cable and Wireless Bill.

It was much nearer closing time when Mr. WILLIAM SHEPHERD thoughtlessly referred to the Bill as a measure of Socialism by the imperial pint.

Mopping a fevered brow, Mr. F. MESSER ventured: "Why remind us of that?" Whereupon Mr. SHEPHERD thirstily pointed out: "I think that even the imperial pint in Socialist hands wants careful watching."

Mr. MESSER perspiringly subsided with the "bitter" reflection: "All pints do."

All of which must have been a quite unnecessary strain on the long-suffering Back-benchers, who, with great self-denial, stayed to listen to the debate instead of rushing out to see exactly how far an imperial pint would go in either Socialist or Tory hands.

Hon. Members who spend most of their spare time and that of their secretaries in trying to get replies from Government departments to complaints made by their constituents were overjoyed to hear Mr. F. BELLENGER, speaking on behalf of the War Office, agree cautiously "in general" that eight months was too long to hold up a reply. Many of them felt that such a time limit at least gave them hope of a reply to letters they had sent off around last Christmas, objecting to the exorbitant prices charged for Christmas trees and the like. It transpired that Captain W. R. S. PRESCOTT had sent five letters to the War Office on one topic, that he received a reply eight months later, and then only on the eve of the matter being raised in the House.



"Absurd! Whoever saw a green one?"

Wednesday, July 3rd.—The centres of attraction in the preliminary sparring before the vital debate on bread rationing opened were the tropical suits sported by Mr. S. S. SILVERMAN and Dr. HYACINTH MORGAN. Mr. A. V. ALEXANDER made a welcome re-appearance after many weeks in India to enliven an otherwise desultory Question-hour, and the House then settled down to hear Mr. JOHN STRACHEY's vindication of the Government's decision to ration bread and flour.

Members could have forgiven the young but capable Minister of Food if he had been hot and not a little bothered at the prospect of an ordeal few Ministers would care to face at the outset of their career, but Mr. STRACHEY, his button-hole adorned by a white carnation, soon proved to be the coolest man in the House.

In a convincing and workmanlike way Mr. STRACHEY revealed the facts and figures which led the Government along the thorny path of rationing.

He spoke of the great gamble entailed in refusing to ration bread, and in his only not-so-cool moment he thumped the dispatch box resoundingly, saying: "We just won't take the

risk, and that's flat." The Parliamentary approbation on a first-rate speech could not have been greater if he had just announced the lifting of the bread ration.

Thursday, July 4th.—After an overnight misunderstanding in the bread rationing debate which led to the stormiest scene of the present Parliament the anti-climax came to-day in a gracious apology by Mr. JOHN STRACHEY. For the purposes of greater accuracy it appeared that Mr. STRACHEY had dispatched his P.P.S. hot-foot to the *Hansard* reporters to check a controversial remark by Mr. R. S. HUDSON, suggesting that Britain, in certain circumstances, might become the worst-fed white nation with the exception of Germany and Austria.

The heat of wordy battle had subsided overnight and Mr. STRACHEY's apology for being ignorant of the custom on this matter enabled the House to resume the even tenor of its way.

Mr. CHURCHILL scored the hit of the day over his antagonist Mr. HERBERT MORRISON in hoping that the House would rise for the summer recess in time for its Leader to go "grouse" shooting. Hon. Members reflected

that Mr. MORRISON had shot many a Parliamentary "grouse" in recent months, and that a visit to the moors on the "Glorious Twelfth" would be in the nature of a busman's holiday.

### Said the Soldier . . .

"If only people  
I Were more unselfish,"  
Said the Soldier,  
"What a much pleasanter place  
The world would be."

"But people are not  
Particularly unselfish,"  
Said the Soldier.  
"So far as that goes  
I'm not particularly  
Unselfish myself," said he.

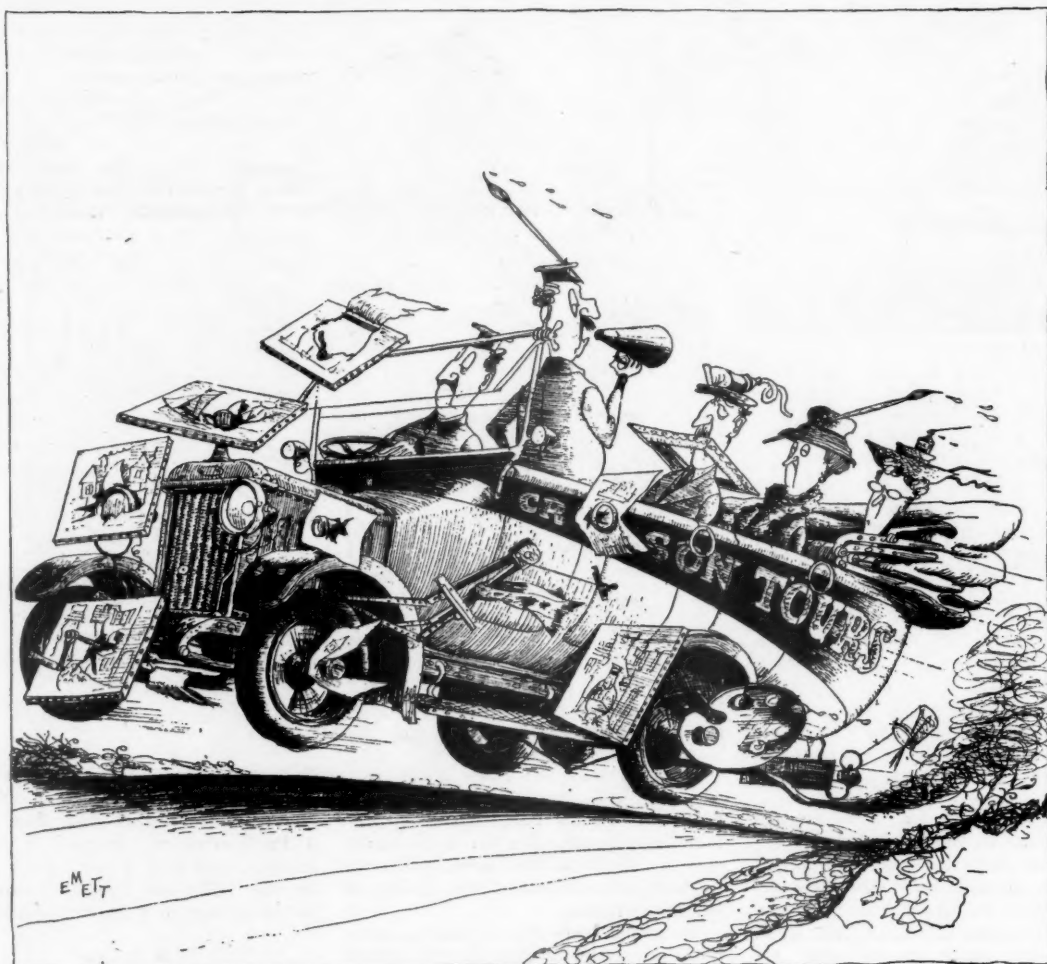
A. W. B.

"On a Winnipeg course golfers—little animals which live underground like rabbits—have become collectors of golf balls. In one of their underground storehouses 250 golf balls were discovered, neatly laid out in lines and packed with moss."

Bombay paper.

Isn't Nature wonderful?





*"And THAT's said to be the most painted village in England."*

## Sporting Notes

(By Captain Haddock)

**S**MALL enthusiasm was shown in racing circles for my brother Albert Haddock's suggestion that purchase tax should be levied on "race-horses and racing greyhounds" in the category of "sports requisites". It seems that he went so far as to put down an amendment on the committee stage of the Finance (No. 2) Bill. Happily, by one of the wise rules of Parliamentary procedure, not always truly appreciated by the public, a private Member may not propose the imposition of a "charge" or tax: so the bizarre amendment

was ruled out of order. But it was printed on the Order Paper; it may well have "put ideas" into ignorant heads at the Treasury: and the levity of my brother's behaviour caused much surprised and unfavourable comment at Sandown yesterday, when *Bottle Nose*, after his triumph in the Shaftesbury Vase, was sold for 175,000 guineas, and it was realized what a tax of even 33½ per cent. upon such a purchase would mean.\*

The whole thing seems to have been

conceived in a fit of childish spite about the levying of purchase tax on sailing and rowing boats. If a modest sailing dinghy, the Member argued, whether used for racing or not, is a "sports requisite", how much more so a horse or dog which may fetch many thousands of pounds at the age of two or three (£10,000 was offered recently for a dog which *failed* to win the Dog Derby). As a point of arid logic, we may at once concede that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to conduct a horse-race without race-horses, so that the term "Sports requisite", to

\* £58,625. Or am I wrong?—THE CAPTAIN

the pedantic mind, may seem to fit. But there is rather more to the matter than that. My brother Albert seems to forget that the main purpose of the purchase tax was to discourage *luxury* expenditure. Racing-men, naturally, have the warmest sympathy with those who do their racing on the water, or anywhere else. But it has to be recognized that boat-sailing, however innocent and even, in some ways, worthy, is a personal indulgence; while horse-racing is the foundation of a national industry. My brother is fond of making fanciful references to Dunkirk: the sailing-boat, he says, is the indispensable school of the men who make such exploits possible. Horsemen, however, are entitled to mention Waterloo, which was, at least, a victory. My brother then goes back to Drake, and the tiresome argument is endless.

What is more important for present and practical purposes, the breeding of blood-stock is one of the few things that we can demonstrably do better than most other nations (though the recent invasion of French horses was not encouraging), and the horse is still one of the most valuable and welcome of our exports. While, therefore, the purchaser of a small sailing-boat may conceivably prepare himself for some future evacuation, as well as enjoy himself, the purchaser of *Bottle Nose*, whether he proposes to employ that great horse on the course or in the stud, is playing a strong part in the national economy *now*, and it would be fantastic to lay a special tax upon such a transaction. It is a pity that some writers cannot cultivate a sense of reverence. Fortunately, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has graciously yielded to the blandishments of the friends of the sailing-boat, which will cost him £100,000 a year. My brother has unhelpfully pointed out that a purchase tax on the sale of quite a few crack horses would yield far more than that: but it is to be hoped that the last has now been heard of his gauche and ill-considered proposal.

Dogs, of course, are another matter. I see no reason why the purchase tax should not be paid when racing greyhounds change hands. They are not exported, so far as I know, in any great numbers. Indeed, I do not know what they are for.

\* \* \* \* \*

At a representative meeting of horses yesterday (Lord Mole's handsome gelding *Canute* in the Chair) some severe comment was heard on the anomalies of entertainments duty.

Since 1935 the circus has been classed with lectures, concerts and the living theatre as "partly educational," and pays a reduced rate of tax (about 42 per cent. on a five-shilling ticket of admission). Horse-racing, however, is classed with the cinema and pays the full rate—about 91 per cent. Leading horses maintained with some force that while the practitioners of the *Haute Ecole* might well be ranked with Ibsen and Shaw, no such claim could be made for the Arithmetical Horse, the Talking Horse, or others whose antics or exhibitions were alien to the best traditions of the horse. If any alleviation of tax was possible, it should fall, surely, not on the pampered indoor performers of the circus but upon those who exhibited the natural powers of the horse at his best, galloping for long distances in competitive conditions, facing rude weather and public obloquy. A resolution demanding fair treatment for the open-air horse was carried by a show of hoofs.

Uproar followed a speech by *Happy Knight*, the unsuccessful Derby favourite, in which he alleged that there was a horse in the Zoo, an exhibition which paid no tax at all. *Dago's Dream*, his long mane rumped, protested against the indignity done to his breed. The horse was not a wild animal: nor, on the other hand, was it an obsolete curiosity, as those in authority would very soon see. *Headache* pointed out, in his familiar acid manner, that the horse was still the measure of the most modern engines of mobility and power; that the highest degree of understanding among the human race was "horse-sense"; that the horse was the one animal described by man as "noble", or (with the trifling exception of the dog) invested with any moral qualities whatever. If he was now to be exhibited in a cage, beside the hyena and the mandrill, it would be the crowning infamy of *Homo perfidus*. (Cries of "Translate!") After a stormy debate, the Chairman restored quiet by an assurance that there was in fact no horse in the Zoo. A motion to run a candidate at the next election was referred back to the Executive.

\* \* \* \* \*

I do not want this to get the name of a "family" column: but I must once more refer to the activities of my brother Albert Haddock. This time the complaint comes from the holders of greyhound racing shares and their professional advisers on the Stock Exchange. As he knows—or should know—very well, these gentlemen

have sensitive natures, and they have their trained and delicate fingers on the pulses of the world. Every time he mentions a betting tax the taut nerves twang, and terror spreads, as at the snap of a twig in the jungle. Shares, laboriously exalted for months, descend like a New York elevator. Widows weep over the "Industrials" list (in which greyhound racing shares are strangely included). Stockbrokers go grey. But the terror passes, and the shares climb back to confidence. And then he does it again. If there were any patriotic purpose behind all this, however lacking in sagacity, there would not be much to be said. But the belief is common that he does it mischievously, merely to annoy.

A. P. H.

o o

## Something in the Wind

I USED to stay with a man who owned a fine weathercock and had had it connected, by means of a good deal of string, with a large arrow in the middle of his dining-room ceiling. That was a strange house. One would come down to breakfast and ask politely if Kent had managed to draw or was there any reliable news about Mussolini going mad, and without looking up he would grunt into his coffee that it was as near N.N.W. as dammit, but if everything held it would be bang in the N. by mid-day. Wind came to dominate his table until he found himself more and more alone, for a host whose small-talk is limited to such observations as "Since you swallowed that last piece of turkey, madam, it has moved right into the West" cannot expect to be for long a social magnet.

And yet he was not far out, for country life, so far as I can fathom country life at all, hinges almost entirely on wind, of which even rain is only a sort of poor relation. But there is very little you can say about it unless you can be reasonably certain whether it is coming in from the Rectory end or from Guatemala or New Zealand. And this is far harder than it sounds. My present method is to get out of bed as soon as I smell the toast burning for breakfast and go out and lie on my back on the lawn in smoked glasses. I used to try sampling the heavens standing up, but one morning the hydraulics at the back of my neck went dead and it was very awkward and expensive to get it down again. But the lawn is always wet, and if the clouds are temperamental



*"Then why advertise it as 'A Home from Home' if my husband isn't expected to complain?"*

and I have to hang about it means I bring a lot of beetles and things in to breakfast, so now we have decided we must have a weathercock.

Weathercocks are like trousers in that you can either buy them off the peg or get them made to measure, but they are unlike them in that they do not wear out and will still be standing on your roof long after you yourself have ceased at the best to be anything more than a pie-eyed figure on a horse in Westminster Abbey. Their theme is therefore terribly important, and much more difficult to make up one's mind about than whether to go for a lightly crossed check or a dash of herring-bone, or even whether to break into the Second Chamber as Lord Wallop of Plumpton Gap or just as plain Lord Mornington Crescent, and the latter is a dilemma which will keep many of us quite common whatever backstairs pressure may be brought to bear.

I was for a bespoke weathercock, and I knew the last thing I wanted was an actual cock. As I said to my chiefs of staff, the creature has become a cliché, it is vulgar in habit, rapacious and of very doubtful character, and

in my case was ruled out from the beginning by my deep dislike for chicken in any form but *à la king*. What was called for was something to symbolize some special interest, something to catch the eye and if possible the wind without being *outré*, and the first suggestion was a tram-car. Well, it was true that at one period in my life a tram-car had made a profound impression on me, but it was past and, as I pointed out, to have a tram-car on the roof would cease to be stimulating after a few days. I felt the same about a row of bottles, attractive as might appear the lovely slender lines of Hock tapering down to the squat, robust figure of the member for Burgundy. Also I thought the subject too painful at what writers with one boot in Downing Street refer to as the present juncture. A head of Toad seemed more likely to endure, as being the only character in fiction whom all those present could agree to like, but the trouble here was to make clear at a height that it was Toad himself and not just any old frog. This difficulty was fundamental and was the reason why *Æolus*, Montgomery and Mr. Gladstone were also blackballed. I

welcomed the idea of a trout until I began to wonder if it was within the powers of Mr. Quitch, our blacksmith, to distinguish it from a pilchard, and that was a risk nobody in their senses would be prepared to take. Not at the present juncture. A garland of bindweed, representing the main outlet for the life-force in the country-dweller, was toyed with inconclusively, as was also a silhouette of the Rural District Council in repose. When someone suggested a diagram of a compost-pit the meeting, and not a moment too soon, broke up in disorder.

But the solution is really very simple. It came to me this morning as I lay on my back on the lawn watching a little family of cumuli going round in a perfect circle. I went to see Mr. Quitch after breakfast and he says nothing could be easier than to make a blank weathervane with a slide into which different designs can be fitted. In this way we can change our programme twice a week if we want to, and no doubt we shall. So if you should come on a brass tram-car nosing into the storm like a Dakota please think of it only as a passing fancy.

ERIC.



## At the Play

### "CRIME AND PUNISHMENT" (NEW)

THOSE who remember the pungent atmosphere of *Strange Orchestra* had little doubt that Mr. RODNEY ACKLAND's special skill in fusing a madly mixed packet of human oddities to fit the theatre would enable him to reproduce some of the authentic fabric of Dostoevsky's novel; what is surprising is how much of its elusive quality he has captured. Even more difficult was to expose at the same time the fury of the storm raging within the tormented *Raskolnikoff*, and that he has done both these things makes this a very good adaptation indeed. *Raskolnikoff's* struggle as his sick mind tries to comprehend the horror of his murder of the two old women, his discovery of his love for *Sonia*, his devilishly oblique interrogation by the *Chief of Police*, and his rejection of his mother—these form the core of the play and show up all the more sharply for the squalid, crazy violence of the background against which they are set. Where the lodging-house, with so many vivid short stories in course of being told, might have swamped the bigger issue of *Raskolnikoff*, Mr. ACKLAND has brought it brilliantly to his aid, and Mr. ANTHONY QUAYLE's production gives full effect to the strange rhythms, tragic and comic, of his orchestration. So also does

Mr. PAUL SHERIFF's set, which is like a large slum doll's house with the front off. In the centre is the hall, and here the motley inmates gather for such mass-scenes as that of *Sonia* being forced on to the streets, the death of *Katerina's* drunken husband, the party after his funeral, *Katerina's* death, and finally *Raskolnikoff's* confession. On the right is a gloomy staircase convenient for the ups and downs of Slav temperament; on the left the shabby little room where *Raskolnikoff's* private battle is being fought out.

It is altogether an exciting and moving piece of work, to which it is hard to do justice in a short notice. I do not see how Mr. JOHN GIELGUD's

*Raskolnikoff* could be bettered as a portrayal of the torture of a fine mind at breaking-point, which leaves no uncertainties and is distinguished by an exquisite balance. The breathless and scatter-brained *Katerina* is delightfully taken by Dame EDITH EVANS, though she makes her so entertaining a figure that some of the tragedy of her situation inevitably escapes. The unusual promise of Miss AUDREY FILDES in *The Rivals* is fulfilled by a most sensitive and moving performance as *Sonia*—really a capital piece of acting. And as the *Chief of Police*

from the Mercury is now playing *This Way to the Tomb*. It is a searing tragedy of frustration and all the other things likely to happen to five unmarried sisters condemned by a morbidly tyrannical mother to eight years of mourning (for a father thankful, no doubt, to go), incarcerated in a small house in a small village, sewing *trousseaux* for improbable marriages, their imprisonment relieved only by the cackling gossip of a Rabelaisian housekeeper. There is one eligible young man in the village, who does not appear; he is engaged to the eldest sister, a second is in love with him, and a third, whom he has seduced, kills herself after her mother has taken a crack at the youth with her fowling-piece. It is a slight story, but told with profound understanding. M. MAURICE JACQUEMONT has produced such a degree of polish in these players, and their acting is so superbly natural, that one is completely translated. Mme. ANNIE CABEL, made up to look like the unhappy matron in the *Death* on the Road poster, only much more so, gives a terrific performance as *Bernarda*, and in fact all the members of this most welcome sisterhood are formidably accomplished.

### "TROILUS AND CRESSIDA" (OPEN AIR, REGENT'S PARK)

For having left so little space to this attractive production of a play too seldom attempted I must blame an unusually good week. On the romantic side it is strong enough,

Miss PATRICIA HICKS playing *Cressida* well, though with an initial virtue which makes her Chaucer's heroine rather than Shakespeare's; and Mr. JOHN BYRON making a brave wooer of *Troilus*. But it is with the eccentrics that it reaches excellence. As *Thersites* Mr. IVAN STAFF is first class, and so is the bitter intellectual, *Ulysses* (whom some have called the real hero of the play), of Mr. DAVID READ. Mr. RUSSELL THORNDIKE floats the fantastic bawdery of *Pandarus* lightly on comedy, and Miss ANGELO SHAFTO's *Cassandra* is a medicine-girl to shiver the stoutest timbers. Mr. ROBERT ATKINS is making all his people speak beautifully, and I have never seen his well-mown stage more lovely. ERIC.



### STRUGGLES ON BOTH SIDES

Radyon Romanovitch Raskolnikoff . . . MR. JOHN GIELGUD  
Sonia . . . MISS AUDREY FILDES  
Katerina Ivanovna Marmeladoff . . . DAME EDITH EVANS

Mr. PETER USTINOV is cleverly cast and is, as always, original. Many others in a long list deserve mention, but chiefly Miss LILLY MOLNAR for her tempestuous landlady, Miss SYBILLA BINDER for her *Madame Raskolnikoff* and Mr. CAMPBELL COTTS for the delicious pomposity of his *Luzhin*.

Go and see it while you can.

### "LA MAISON DE BERNARDA" (MERCURY)

FEDERICO GARCIA LORCA was a young Spanish dramatist killed in the Civil War, and this is his last play, translated into French by M. JEAN-MARIE CREACH and acted magnificently by the ladies of the Studio des Champs Élysées, where the company



"Just run over the whole case-history again—from where you made the mocking remark about the witch doctor."

### Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

#### New Spain and Old

A FORGOTTEN Royal Academician once complained that unless he exhibited a group of silver birch trees every year he might just as well not exhibit at all. One rather feels that *St. John of the Cross* (FABER, 15/-) has acquired the same signature-tune significance for Professor E. ALLISON PEERS' large and deservedly enthusiastic public; for the accomplished Rede Lecture on the saint with which his collected addresses open is less alive than their quota—about one-half—of modern Spanish studies. These introduce the Catalan Renaissance, a typical regional-federal movement of the kind so urgently needed to-day. This is approached mainly through its men of letters, several of whom served the sort of romantic novitiate which (if it does not, like Byron's, go on too long) has a way of proceeding to heroic action and abiding results. The most intimate of the modern studies is that of Francesc Macià, first President of the Catalan State. "The Real Blasco Ibáñez" is assessed before "picture-palace popularity" ruined him. "Antonio Machado" shows to what great ends poetry could conceive of itself as dedicated before it came to pride itself on its uselessness. "Alfonso XIII" admirably recalls a sovereign who made the best of a hopeless task and was almost unique in maintaining a truce of sorts between Church and State.

H. P. E.

### On History

In *The Use of History* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 4/6) Mr. A. L. ROWSE discusses history as a subject of study, under its utilitarian aspect and also under its pleasure-giving. Mr. ROWSE is at his best in the chapter on "The Pleasures of History," which opens with an account of the Cornish port near his old home as it was when primitive man lived by it; in the Middle Ages, when forty-seven ships sailed from it to join Edward III's armada outside Calais; at the time of the Reformation, when its leading men supported Thomas Cromwell; in the Civil War, when Essex surrendered to the Royalists near by. When he leaves the picturesque aspect of history to consider the intellectual benefits conferred by the study of the past, Mr. ROWSE is not very illuminating. The chapter to which he attaches most value is one called "Historical Thinking." This, he suggests, should be read twice. In it he argues that the evolutionary philosophy of the last century has completely recast our view of the universe and abolished all absolute values. We now look at everything in "an almost completely relativist way." As usual with those who deny absolute values, Mr. ROWSE has no patience with anyone whose relativity does not coincide with his own. From Lord Acton down to a correspondent whom he refers to as "the Ealing Idiot," Mr. ROWSE treats everyone with whom he disagrees in a manner which does nothing to support his case for history as a humanizing study.

H. K.

### Non tali ausilio

*Fine Arts* (DUCKWORTH, 12/6) is the sort of hospitable entertainment that, coming on top of the austere life, lays a famished guest out for a fortnight. The author maintains that the fine arts are losing ground in England. He also maintains that a good citizen should appreciate the fine arts. This depends, however, on what sort of citizen you want; and whether you are prepared to forfeit qualities ranking higher in the proletarian scale than æsthetic sensibility in order to secure your æsthete. Mr. F. E. HALLIDAY's method is to approach poetry by way of painting, architecture, music and so forth: each section setting forth his personal conclusions on the subject, amplified by an enterprising selection of authoritative pronouncements and quotations. His own views, he admits, are tentative; but there is nothing tentative about people like Clive Bell, Eric Gill, A. E. Housman, G. M. Hopkins, the Futurists and G. Lowes Dickenson, all blaring away together like an orchestra in which each man has composed his own score and hardly anybody glances at the conductor. Creation is, historically, antecedent to criticism; and it seems a doubtful expedient to introduce, say, *The Poetics* to a man who has never read a Greek play, even in a crib. "We learn what poetry is," as Mr. T. S. Eliot says tritely, "—if we ever do learn—by reading it."

H. P. E.

### Parliamentary Reminiscences

In *Back-Bencher and Chairman* (JOHN MURRAY, 18/-) Lord HEMINGFORD has given his memories of Parliament, where, as Sir Dennis Herbert, he was for many years Chairman of Committees and Deputy Speaker. It must be admitted that the qualities of tact, reserve and discretion essential to an effective chairman are not the qualities which give warmth and vivacity to reminiscences. This book would probably have made a stronger appeal to the general reader had it been written at the stage in the author's career when, as the editor of a page in a Conservative Party magazine, he was very nearly involved in a

libel action; an experience, he says, which taught him to be more careful in future. Nevertheless, there is much of solid interest in this volume, especially in the chapter that deals with the duties of the Chairman of Ways and Means. It must be an extraordinary discipline of character to be, as the author is, a man of strong party convictions and yet be in a position where he has to exercise the strictest impartiality. Of the other chapters, perhaps the two of greatest interest are those dealing with the Abdication and with Munich. It is as well to be reminded, after all the books which have appeared since, of what actually happened in the Commons on September 28th, 1938—"No one on that day appeared to criticize the Prime Minister's actions, nor on that day was anything heard of those who afterwards spoke and wrote so bitterly of the 'Men of Munich.'"

H. K.

### Guerrilla in a Coronet

Hornblower, estimable and delightful fellow, must take a grip on himself. It is not his success of which we complain—for his advancement to *Lord Hornblower* (MICHAEL JOSEPH, 9/6) is no more than he deserves—but his growing habit of self-analysis. He can now scarcely command the admirable Brown to bring his boots without pacing the quarter-deck for half an hour searching his conscience to decide if a faint smile accompanying the order would not convey an impression of unseemly frivolity and perhaps endanger the discipline of the entire Fleet. Mr. C. S. FORESTER should make haste to introduce him to a good psychiatrist or the nearest thing that can be found in the Harley Street of George the Third, for he is a great man and it is time he grew up. In this book he is dispatched across the Channel to deal with an awkward mutiny in a brig off Le Havre, and converts this small mission by masterly seamanship and cunning into a mighty blow against the Empire. So long as he is at sea his magic holds, and the action is described with all Mr. FORESTER's graphic skill; it is in his subsequent adventures on land, when Bonaparte's escape drives Hornblower and a small band into the maquis, that the story loses way. And the end, which should be exciting enough, for Hornblower and the Comte de Gracay are about to be shot, is weakened by our too easy guess that the news of Waterloo is waiting comfortably on the last page. This is, in fact, not more than a two-star Hornblower. One hopes that, in spite of his high position and of Lady Barbara's immersion in European politics, Mr. FORESTER will find means to keep him at sea, for there he is twice the man.

E. O. D. K.

### Several Kinds of Story

*Life Comes to Seathorpe* (EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE, 10/6) makes baffling and rather tantalising reading because the author, Mr. NEIL BELL, has caged three birds of very different feather in one cover. One begins by being interested in a book that starts as a straightforward, though rather sombre story of family life, one goes on to enjoy a thriller, and one ends by being revolted by the psychological study of a diseased mind whose owner tries to take revenge on society in general and flogging schoolmasters in particular by using science to help his perverted imagination. The hero, Mark, is brought up from the age of seven by a father who had been blinded in the last war and then deserted by his wife. The boy grows up, becomes a journalist and goes on a job to Seathorpe where strange things begin to happen. Animals are found dead and half-eaten, babies are smothered, and people frightened by mysterious Things whose only traces are bad smells, pools of liquid and curious tracks. The journalist, a doctor,

an inspector of police and several local inhabitants all join together to discover and trap the menace. It would not be fair to author or readers to give the result, but it can be said that murder adds to the complications of a book that leaves a remarkably nasty flavour behind in the last chapter, which takes the form of a confession. Mr. BELL writes well and, in places, almost too convincingly, for one has to remind oneself frequently that the happenings he describes are safely inside a book.

B. E. B.

### Labour and Liberty

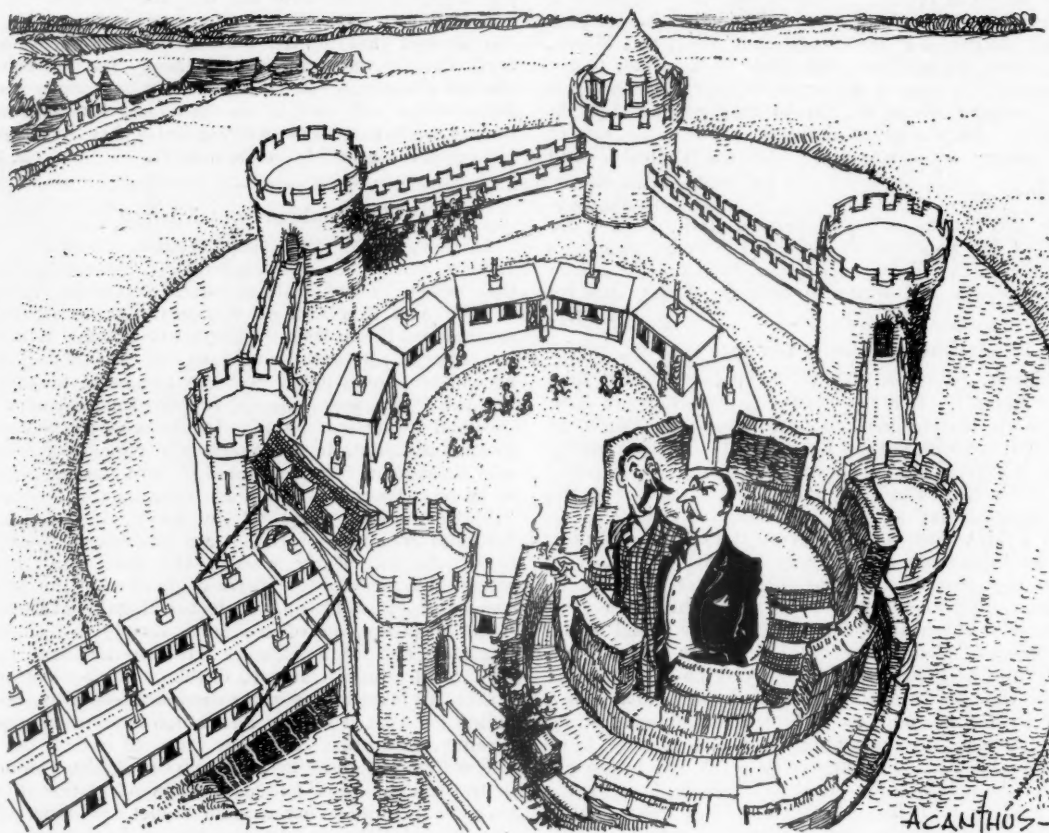
In the April of 1945 the Executive Committee of the Labour Party issued a pre-election document, declaring their policy. Through it, says Mr. DONALD McI. JOHNSON in *The End of Socialism* (CHRISTOPHER JOHNSON, 8/6), recurs like a theme song the single word Plan. Everything, the Party announced, was to be Planned—building, agriculture, investment, and the rest—and to carry this out the Party was prepared to take the necessary steps, enforced by drastic action. In his book the author tells us that although he was practically offered an easy path into Parliament if he consented to turn Labour he refused to do so. There was too much planning and far too much "drastic action" required to carry it through. The National Socialism of Hitler and the Soviet Socialism of Stalin showed clearly whither this led. Both of these remarkable men became instruments of what the American sociologist James Burnham calls the Managerial Revolution—the dispossession of capitalist society by a class of managers and administrators. It does not take long for your head administrator to develop into a dictator. He attains his headship by party discipline—and Mr. JOHNSON points out that it is easy for discipline to degenerate into tyranny. The British Labour Party of to-day, he writes, differs from all preceding parties in the British Constitution in the rigidity—and ferocity—of its party discipline. It may not be quite so fierce as the Soviet discipline. It uses not "liquidation" as its punishment for refusing to toe the party line, but expulsion. The threat of this is commonly enough: your youthful politician does not want to see his career cut short at the start. This is a brightly written book, with a welcome sense of humour, especially noticeable in the fifth chapter, on Pyramids.

L. W.



"So Philbin did get his strong lad, then."





"Went out one night and forgot to raise the drawbridge."

### *The Problem of the Naïve Detective*

I HAVE been having considerable trouble with my sleuth, Professor Fazackerley. The Professor was very active as an amateur detective between the wars, and during an unbroken run of successes (recorded by me in a series of volumes) he put up the very creditable aggregate score of twenty-one murderers brought to justice for twenty-nine corpses.

Now that peace is with us the Professor is back on the trail again. He is picking up the scent in a baffling murder, *The Body in the Spinney*. The difficulties do not arise from any falling-off of his astonishing powers, but from the fact that he has come back completely innocent of the Facts of Peace, with the result that all through *The Body in the Spinney* I have been constantly preventing him

from doing things which would shake the credibility of the reader.

For instance, the first tussle I had with the Professor was over his exclusive restaurant. Here, in the old days, Scotland Yard men at their wits' end used to seek him out in his wonted secluded corner; and it was here, at the opening of *The Body in the Spinney*, that the Professor proposed to drop in to discuss a *selle de veau à l'Orloff*, for which the restaurant used to be famous. I had to break it to him that the restaurant is now exclusive only in the sense that if you are not in the queue by noon you will have to take either pot, or rough, luck. Furthermore, *selle de veau à l'Orloff* is permanently off, the specialty of the restaurant having become *Tortilla à la Valladolid*, which was omelette of

powdered egg with bits of scam stuck in it, until scam went off the market, and latterly omelette of powdered egg with bits of bully stuck in it, until powdered egg went off the market. As regards the Chambertin (1908), which was sometimes Fazackerley's final selection, there is now nothing for it but Vin Ordinaire de la Victoire, a fabulous wine both from the point of view of cost and credibility.

Professor Fazackerley has a nice palate, and in all his pre-war cases there are constant descriptions of meals, with Fazackerley's judgment on them. I confess I used to encourage him in this; it helped to fill in the story, and often I got a vicarious enjoyment of choice repasts beyond the range of my royalties. But Fazackerley has come back without

an understanding of the sway of the Minister of Food, God of Scarcity, whose meagre cornucopia could not drop even a bonus egg for the Victory rites, and whose dread law of diminishing rations has long since starved gourmets out of existence. Early in *The Body in the Spinney* Fazackerley nearly had me writing this:

"Having sent his wire to Inspector Gubbins [about a clue the Inspector had overlooked] Fazackerley, very well pleased with himself, went into The Scythe and Hone for lunch. There was the usual menu of an English market-town hotel: nondescript soup, limp Dover sole, sirloin of beef with Yorkshire pudding and roast potatoes, oozing with fat, and stewed plums and cream. He retired before the threat of the inevitable wedge of gorgonzola and took a chartreuse in the smoking-room for his stomach's sake."

And in the first draft of Chapter VII, in which Fazackerley makes a masterly examination of the body in the spinney at dawn, this passage actually got past me:

"Coming down the hill to the Sergeant's cottage, Fazackerley found that that worthy officer's wife had prepared him a breakfast of grilled Wiltshire ham and fried eggs, home-made bread, farm-house butter and a huge slab of honey in the comb. An appetite promoted by the keen upland air enabled Fazackerley to make a show of doing justice to this Gargantuan repast, but he wished inwardly that the good woman could have known that he preferred his eggs fried on both sides."

Professor Fazackerley is still more out of his depth as regards the background of life. For example, he was gazing moodily at the view of the Thames from his rooms on the Embankment when he suddenly made the decision to go down and inspect the body in the spinney personally. It was then fourteen minutes past three. There was an *express* train from Paddington at 3.36. *He could just do it.* He threw a few things into a bag, jumped into a passing taxi, and half an hour later was speeding out of London in an *empty* first-class carriage. He carefully lit a cigar, and then settled himself to study the locality of the crime on a five-inch-to-the-mile map.

I have italicized the howlers which my readers should have held up against me had I let Fazackerley do things his way. The map I have passed: Fazackerley may have taken it from old pre-war stock. Also I stretch a point about the cigar: Fazackerley might

have got it from a stray G.I. Joe. But there are still underlying objections. The time-allowance does not permit of waiting in a queue for a ticket. And does this sleuth go to the West country without the unexpended portion of his bacon and fats ration?

The really bright reader, however, will have noticed an implied and cardinal error: every flat with a view of the Thames is requisitioned by the Government, and Professor Fazackerley cannot therefore be residing to-day in his old rooms. Right. The block which I have always pictured as containing Fazackerley's flat is, in fact, the Regional Office of the Business Requisites Control, and Fazackerley's laboratory—where he made such far-reaching deductions from his analysis of the fluff from a key in *The Corpses in the Corridor*—is now the office of the secretary of the Divisional Officer of the Mucilage (Non-resinous) Department.

Professor Fazackerley still does not realize that the queue is the dominant feature in life in Victory-England. Perhaps I was wrong to introduce him to it frivolously. I imagined the Professor as being highly placed in a fish queue when he spots his quarry going by. What should a sleuth do in this situation—go after his man and lose his fish, or hang on for his fish and lose his man? After I had had my fun, Fazackerley jibbed at a really good variation: Fazackerley spots his quarry in an orange queue, and knows therefore that he has unlimited time to search his quarry's hotel apartment. Nor would he have a better one still: Fazackerley wanted to keep observation on the flat of the sinister lady of Chapter XI. I suggested that he could keep close watch on the flat from

a queue—and, incidentally, be the first detective in fiction to think of this. What more unobtrusive? He could stand there all day long without attracting attention to himself. But Fazackerley made the ingenuous objection that her flat was not in a shopping thoroughfare, but in a West End square. As if that mattered! You can have queues, with or without songs in their hearts, anywhere, and no concessions for expectant fathers. In the square there could very well be a queue at the telephone booth, a queue for the black-market-elastic man, a queue on the reputed beat of a mushroom barrow, and I dare say a queue at the rumoured site in the square's gardens for a prefabricated house.

In all these daily difficulties I have so far been able to come to some compromise with Fazackerley. But this morning we arrived at an impasse. Fazackerley has been analysing the vital clue of a chewed cigarette-end which was found near the body in the spinney, and in order to identify the maker he wants me to let him just go into a leading tobacconist's and buy a packet of every known brand on the market. He lost his temper when I objected that they would either have "No Cigarettes" or "Turkish Only," and he has thrown up the case in a huff.

This is all the more unfortunate, because the police (in Chapter IX) have already arrested the wrong man, Montmorency. He is a good fellow, the father of a family of nice girls, but the case against him is a damning one, and unless I can talk Fazackerley into finding the actual murderer I shall have to leave Montmorency to round off a blameless life on the gallows.



## Sweet Report

THERE'S always someone ready to sneer at everything the Government does, so naturally I expected criticism when I took over as Chairman of the Working Party to the Confectionery Trade. And now of course they've all changed their tune and want to know how it's done.

It's hard to believe that I didn't know a thing about confectionery when I started: frankly, I hadn't touched a sweet since I was a boy at school, if you exclude an occasional throat tablet and some dreadful medicinal chocolate which a wily nephew once persuaded me to try. Nor had I any knowledge of Working Parties: in fact when I first read my letter of appointment I had a vision of some sort of spree, with all the guests dressed in corduroys—rather like those whimsical affairs which the bright young things used to hold in the 'twenties—and it wasn't until I saw the rather austere signature at the foot that I knew it was a different kind of party altogether.

Of course a great deal of my success is due to the other guests, who have all pulled their weight admirably. Mrs. Claxton-Buzzard has occasionally been rather difficult, especially when she kept on about whipped cream walnuts; and Joe Pickles, formerly secretary of the Toffee-Apple Re-Rollers' Association (Employees' Section), has been rather insistent about

certain wage applications, just as if the Conservatives were still in office, but on the whole co-operation has been very smooth.

Our first investigation showed an urgent need for rationalization. No fewer than 10,293 different varieties of confectionery existed, and obviously no large-scale drive for increased production was possible until the range had been considerably simplified. I put our first findings forward to one of our leading confectioners and he telegraphed me a very brief but helpful reply suggesting that I cut out the humbug.

This has always struck me as a particularly nauseating brown-and-white striped affair, far too large to be eaten at one sitting. I do not know what the etiquette of the confection is, but I presume it to be similar to the extinguished cigar with a social prohibition on a resumed suck. If so, it is terribly wasteful, and I thought the suggestion an admirable choice for our first elimination.

At an early stage we came up against the chocolate problem. It was obvious that when my Party really got cracking chocolate production would be simply colossal.

It seemed to us that this would create an invidious position for the Minister of Food, forcing him into a rôle analogous to that of Marie Antoinette, for when the people cried

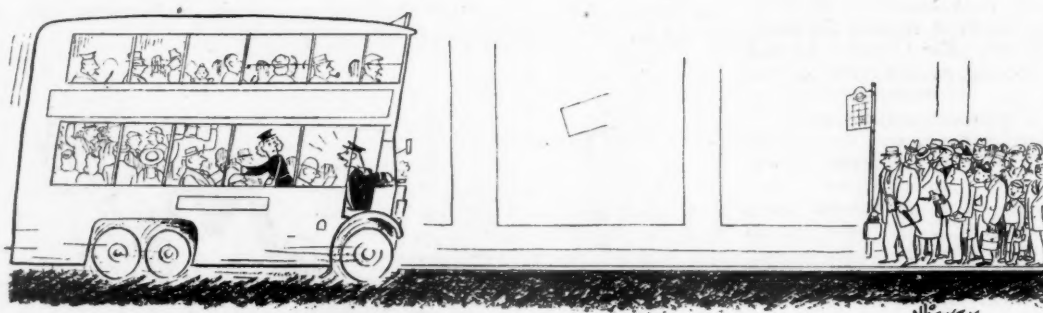
out for bread he would be in the absurd position of answering their plea with chocolate marshmallow. So chocolate was out.

So, too, went a number of other varieties. Reluctantly we have had to sacrifice a great many old favourites, for after a full and impartial consideration of the national interest we have decided to concentrate on two varieties: liquorice allsorts and Uncle Joe's mint balls. Liquorice allsorts have had to be slightly modified—few people outside the trade appreciate the enormous work involved in arranging them in a box so that each customer will have all sorts of allsorts: moreover, this work is invariably done on Saturday mornings, so that to allow for the five-day week we have introduced a utility pattern, which will be marketed as liquorice onesorts. Uncle Joe's mint balls, made from plaster of Paris and oil of mint, present no problem and will continue unchanged.

Our final report to the Minister anticipates that following the completion of the three new shadow factories for confectionery production, the ration for each person per period will be increased to:

Liquorice Onesorts . . .	$\frac{1}{2}$ cwt.
Uncle Joe's Mint Balls . .	3 tons

It just shows what a planned economy can do, doesn't it?



"Stand by to repel boarders!"

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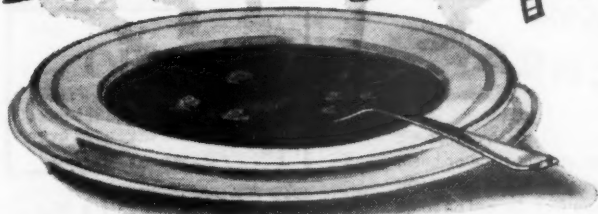
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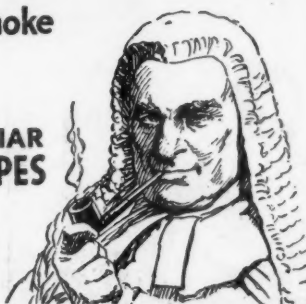


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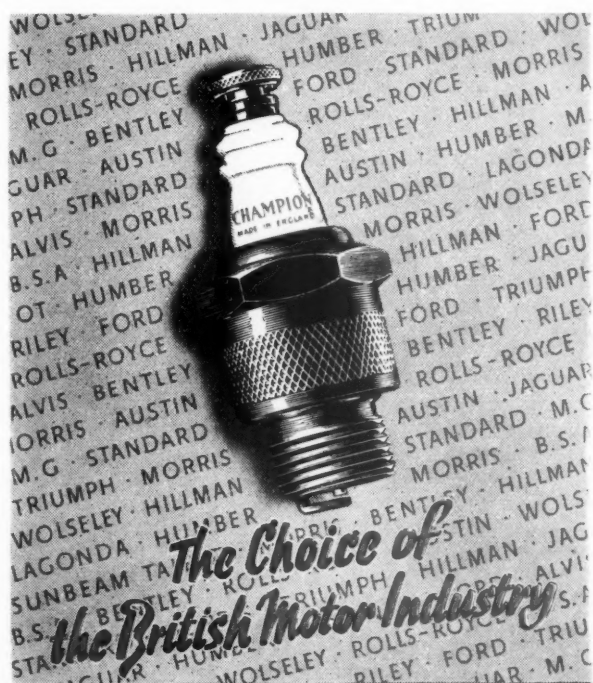
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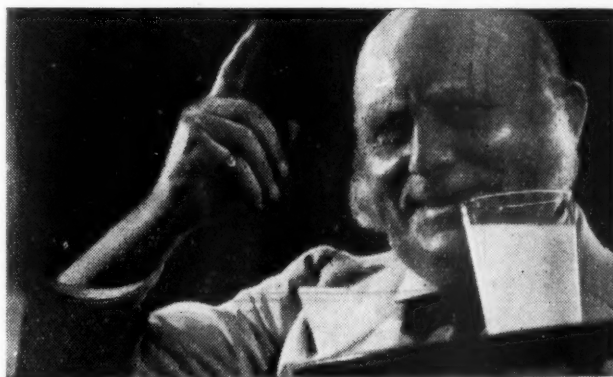
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says OLD HETHERS

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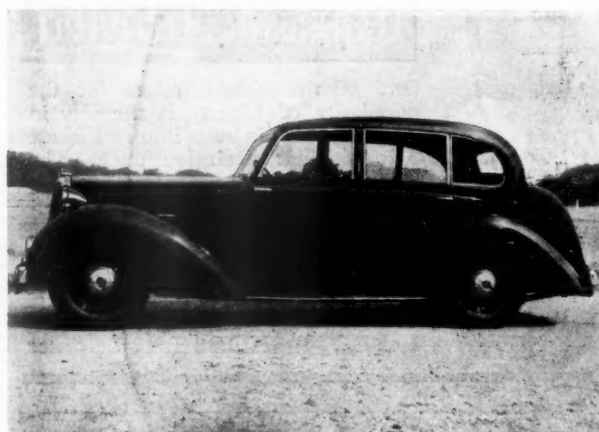
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